

THE MORNING NEWS

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WEB breaks ground on innovative Ice Storage Cooling Project



Unveiling the site

BALASHI -- Working closely with the government and prompting many of the initiatives towards a "green" Aruba, is WATER- EN EN-ERGIEBEDRIJF ARUBA N.V.- (WEB) the national power and water producing plant.

On Tuesday, February 4, WEB broke ground on what is, for the island, a new and innovative project regarding energy conservation and reduced carbon emissions, the Ice Storage Cooling Project. Partners on this facility are principally Pro Tec, the Aruban agents for Trane systems, using technology from CALMAC, the world leader in the product design and manufacture of thermal energy storage for commercial air-conditioning systems.

As explained by the Managing Director of WEB NV, Oslin J. Boekhoudt, achieving the goals of drastically reduced use of oil as an energy source, and the reduced CO2 emissions resulting from this, is not only an issue of constructing alternative, renew-

able energy sources, but also smart management of deploying all sources in the most efficient, economical manner.

IceBank thermal energy storage tanks, produced by CALMAC, can store renewable energy, like wind and inexpensive night-time electricity, in the form of ice, for use during peak demand periods. Reducing the peak electric demand using thermal energy storage can cut cooling costs 20-40%, source energy and emissions are reduced and construction of new power plants and transmission lines can be delayed or eliminated.

Jan van Haren of Pro Tec provided the details of how the system being installed to cool WEB headquarters works. Day time work periods require extra cooling to keep workers comfortable, while energy demand is high with more lights, continual usage of computers, copy machines and other office equipment. At night, when energy demand is low, the

chiller, which circulates cool water through the building, rather than using conventional methods of air-conditioning, will fill the storage tank with ice, which will be used to cool the water during the day. The system will also greatly reduce CO2 and heat emissions associated with traditional forms of air-conditioning, aside from greatly reducing the energy demand.

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Winter storm cancels flights in US northeast

NEW YORK (AFP) - Treacherous snow and freezing rain struck the northeastern United States Wednesday, disrupting thousands of flights and causing traffic chaos for millions.

More than 600,000 people were without power as high winds and ice knocked down trees and electrical lines.

Most were in Pennsylvania, but New Jersey and New York also experienced significant outages.

A state of emergency was declared in New Jersey and New York, where dwindling reserves of salt -- used to melt snow and road ice -- was a problem.

By late January, New Jersey had already used 277,000 tonnes of salt, 18,000 more than during the entire previous winter.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo said the state's highway department had enough salt to deal with the storm and was sending 130 truckloads to help address shortages in New York City and Long Island.

"The State is also working with suppliers to increase salt deliveries to local governments," his office said in a

statement.

Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy on Wednesday ordered all non-essential employees to stay home and a number of schools were also closed.

Heavy snowfall was expected across a swath of the northeastern United States, arriving in New England from the central United States. Snow will be followed in several places by freezing rain, forecasters said.

More than 3,000 US flights were cancelled Wednesday and over 7,000 were delayed, according to FlightAware.com.

Hardest hit were airports in Boston, New York and Chicago.

Little relief from the brutal winter blast was expected anytime soon.

"Snow will come to an end in the Northeast tonight as Arctic air surges down into much of the northern and eastern two-thirds of the country," the national weather service said.

Weather forecasters have warned that yet another winter storm is likely to hit at the weekend.



NIAGARA FALLS, CANADA : Ice forms on the Niagara River in front of the American Falls on the left and the Canadian Horseshoe Falls on the right on February 5, 2014 in Niagara Falls, Canada. An additional foot of snow blanketed Western New York overnight in the latest winter storm system that has affected areas from Kansas to Maine. (AFP photo)

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Aruba hosts a two day seminar on Horizon 2020



P.M. Eman

ORANJESTAD -- The Europe House, situated within the Dr. Edward Cheung Center for Innovation, hosted a two day seminar over Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning regarding the Horizon 2020 Initiative. Horizon 2020 is the most far reaching and well funded European Union Research and Innovation program to date with nearly 80 Billion Euros in funding available over seven years, from 2014 through 2020. The intension is "a financial instrument implementing the Innovation Union, a Europe 2020 flagship initiative aimed at securing Europe's global competitiveness."

"Seen as a means to drive economic growth and create jobs, Horizon 2020 has the political backing of Europe's leaders and the Members of the European Parliament. They agreed that research is an investment in our future and so put it at the heart of the EU's blueprint for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs." The Horizon 2020 strategy is "to respond to the current economic crisis by investing in future jobs and growth, ad-

dress the public's concerns about their livelihoods safety and environment, and strengthen the EU's global position in research, innovation and technology." Priorities include addressing and encouraging excellent science, industrial leadership, and societal changes and improvement.

On Aruba providing an orientation on the program and methods for submitting projects, finding partners and obtaining funding, were Koos de Korte and Ben Kubbinga from the Netherlands. The diversity of interested parties attending the orientation demonstrated that the "Horizon 2020 policy is open to everyone, with a simple structure that reduces red tape and time so participants can focus on what is really important. This approach makes sure new projects get off the ground quickly – and achieve results faster." Aruban Social and environmental organizations and foundations, the Department of Public Works, National Library of Aruba, engineering firms and private companies specializing in renewable energy projects, are a sampling of those present for the presentations.

To obtain funding, applicants are advised to keep watch on the Horizon 2020 Participant Portal, <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/>. This can be used as a calendar for the calls for proposals ('calls'), to be published during the year. The Participant Portal is the



Ben Kubbinga

entry point for electronic administration of EU-funded research and innovation proj-

ects, and hosts the services for managing proposals and projects throughout their lifecycle.

All proposals are evaluated by a panel of independent specialists in their fields. The panel checks each proposal against a list of criteria to see if it should receive funding. Once a proposal passes the evaluation stage (five months' duration), applicants are informed about the outcome. The Euro-

pean Commission then draws up a grant agreement with each participant. The grant agreement confirms what research & innovation activities will be undertaken, the project duration, budget, rates and costs, the European Commission's contribution, all rights and obligations and more. The time limit for signing the grant agreements is generally three months.

Aruba, as a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, is eligible for inclusion in the Horizon 2020 program.



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Aruba hosts a two day seminar...

Cont. from pg 2



Prime Minister Mike Eman, who came to greet the presenters, described it as a "win/win initiative" for all parties involved, furthering the stated goal of Aruba as a "Green Gateway" to the region.

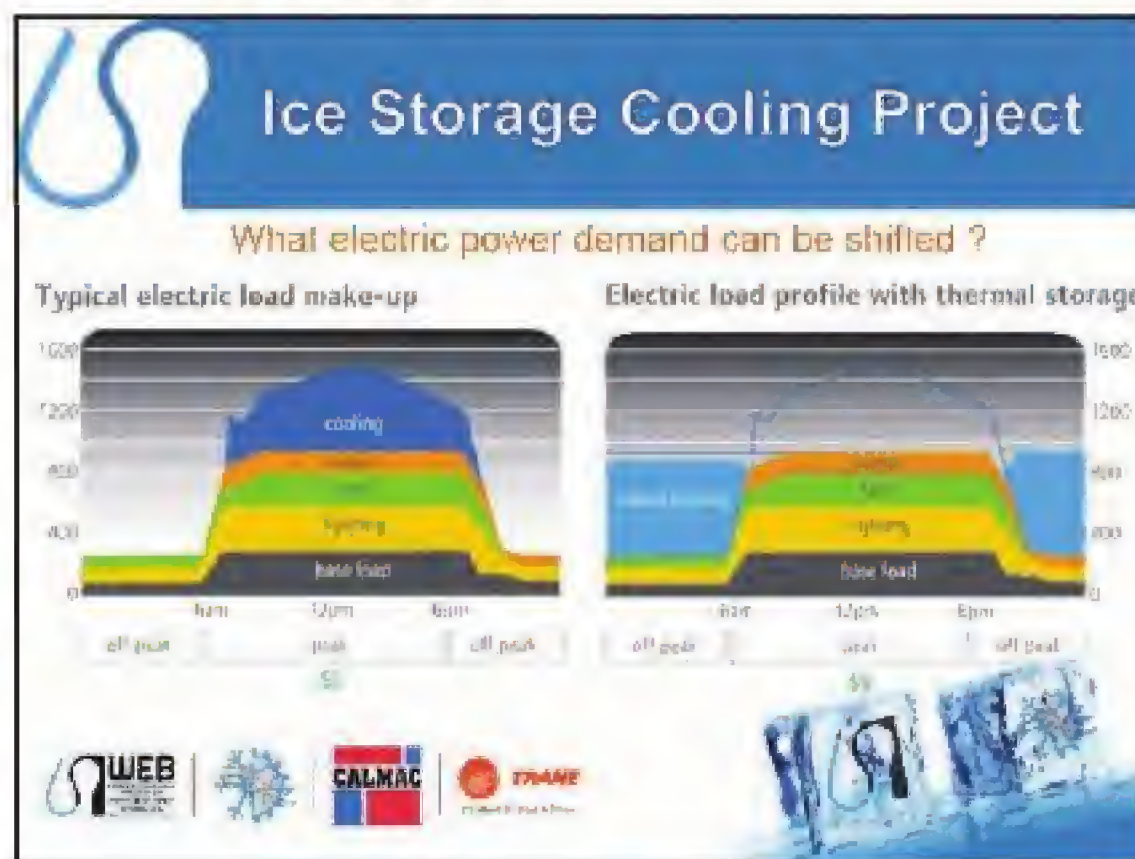
More information about available funding and calls for projects, particularly targeting the Caribbean region, can be found through Eucarinet, at <http://www.eucarinet.eu/>. "EUCARINET is a four-year INCONET Coordination Action, supported by

the European Commission (DG RTD-INCO), whose main goal is to strengthen bi-regional sustainable dialogue on Science and Technology between Europe and the Caribbean." The project consortium includes 11 partners, 5 from the EU and 6 from the Caribbean, representing stakeholders from research, industry, government and civil society, that will ensure the fulfillment of EUCARINET's objectives.

By Rosalie Klein

WEB breaks ground...

Cont. from pg 1



As is the practice on Aruba when embarking on a major project, WEB NV and Pro Tec collaborated in making a charitable donation of the same system to FAVI, the island foundation assisting the visually impaired. President of FAVI, Joyce Duinker, accepted a symbolic check for 17,000 Aruban florins (\$9,714 U.S.) the value of the system being installed at their training and social center.



Prime Minister Mike Eman and a number of island dignitaries were on hand for the groundbreaking ceremony. Prime Minister Eman applauded WEB on their continuing efforts and cooperation toward attaining the declared goal of his administration, a 100% "green Aruba" by the year 2020. Their continual pursuit of innovative methods of obtaining "clean," renewable energy, along with technology to most efficiently and economically deploy energy sources, is a vital part of Aruba to maintaining manageable energy rates in a region where this is a highly worrisome issue.

Both WEB and Pro Tec are enthusiastic about the possibilities of the ice storage technology, and invite other businesses under construction under renovation to investigate its possibilities.



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Government announce to Parliament publicly that Westin employees are protected by Aruba's labour laws



ORANJESTAD -- Minister of Labour Paul Croes received an invitation from Parliament to inform them on the development regarding the Westin Hotel. The Minister is convinced that our labour laws and our legal rights system provide sufficient protection for local employees. In the same manner that the government respects investments in our economy and believes that economic injection contributes to stability and continuity in our tourism sector, the government is firm in the protection of employees in our job market.

The Minister of Labour, Paul Croes, has declared that he stands alongside of the Westin employees in the sense that, transparent and correct information is essential. The employees have right to be respected, in the same way that the owners have the liberty to offer them a severance package. What the Minister wants to guarantee is a just package for each employee. They must be able to evaluate this and decide whether they want to accept it or not.

This public meeting was called with some urgency, albeit the matter was already dealt with behind closed doors. Paul Croes indicated that the government is dealing with this matter in all transparency and will submit all necessary information.

The employees' employer has requested all 382 employees to accept mentioned package. However, there are discrepancies between the initial package and the subsequent package introduced to different employees. This has created some confusion among the employees and obviously, has raised many questions.

The Union Team, together with the Minister is monitoring the entire situation to guarantee that the employee's

rights are respected and all information is submitted correctly. They have asked the Government's Mediator, Anselmo Pontilius to also monitor the situation to guarantee all employees' rights are safeguarded.

The government is cognizant of the fact that the renovation of the Westin is necessary and that there are particular interests of business owners and investors. However, the Minister reiterated that transparency is of utmost importance and the legal rights of employees must be respected without question. The government wishes to see a process where the rights of the employee are central.

We have a labour market to protect. We currently have an unemployment rate of 8%, of which we do not want to see a growth.

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Anthony and June Ann Cataldo honored at the Marriott Surf Club



Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very lovely couple whom are loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba, at the Marriott Surf Club, as Distinguished visitors. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10 to 19 consecutive years.

The honorees were Mr. Anthony and Mrs. June Ann Cataldo from Saddle River NJ. Anthony and June Ann are loyal members of the Marriott Surf Club and they love Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the climate, safety, beaches, restaurants, ease of getting around the Island and being on Aruba and staying at the Marriott is like being home for them. The certificates were presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Ms. Jennifer Boekhoudt.

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The Netherlands, not USA, gathered info from 1.8 million phone calls

THE HAGUE -- The Dutch security service was responsible for collecting information from about 1.8 million telephone calls and text messages at the end of 2012 and in early 2013, ministers have told parliament.

Home affairs minister Ronald Plasterk told MPs in October the Americans were behind the tapping, after the revelations were first published in German magazine Spiegel.

However, in a two paragraph briefing on Wednesday, Plasterk and defence minister Jeanine Hennis said the information had been gathered by the Netherlands itself.

Counter-terrorism

'The details were collected in the interest of counter-terrorism activities and military operations abroad,' the briefing stated. The information was then 'correctly shared with the US'.

Nos television journalist Joost Vullings said the revelations are painful for Plasterk because of his October

statement.

'He did not know at the time it was his own information,' Vullings told Nos radio. 'And it is painful that it has taken him so long to find out exactly what was going on.'

Need

MPs have already called for an explanation of the mix-up. D66 parliamentarian Gerard Schouw said he wants to know why it is necessary to collect information about 1.8 million phone calls.

'How many terrorists does the minister think are walking around the Netherlands?' he commented to news agency ANP. 'This is out of all proportion.'

A spokesman for Plasterk told the Volkskrant the data traffic which had been monitored was not phone calls or text messages between Dutch mobile phones, as had been implied last year.

Instead the information was gathered from satellite and radio-based phone calls, messages and emails, the paper says.

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Post Aruba a new selling point for the Aruba Caiso & Soca Monarch 2014



ORANJESTAD -- Carnival is one of the most important cultural events of the year

and the Caiso & Soca Monarch is also one of the most visited festivals, there-

fore Post Aruba joined forces with Fundacion Musica and Lotto pa Deporte to become a

sale point of for this event. The tickets will be available for any of these festival days at the main office of Post Aruba at Oranjestad.

For those busy people who would like to assist the event, they have the possibility to order the tickets via e-mail ticketsale@postaruba.com. These tickets will be delivered to any place in Aruba until 4pm for a reasonable price.

In this e-mail the information required will be: amount of tickets, for which date, full name, address and telephone number (preferable a mobile number). The amount of tickets will not make a difference in relation to the delivery cost and tickets for any of the events will have to be paid on delivery by using any ATM card.

Post Aruba is not only pro-

viding the possibility to buy tickets here, but with the cooperation of CPost, the postal administration of Curacao and St. Maarten, we are also giving customers in those islands the possibility to purchase tickets online or at their local post offices. They also offer the service of home/work delivery.

This is the beginning of an alliance between the three islands in order to provide the possibility to those who would like to come to this great festival or other activities to get their tickets before they come to Aruba, as such ensuring their entry.

Post Aruba is looking forward to increasing these alliances, locally and internationally, to offer new possibilities to the community.



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North, South Korea agree to first reunions since 2010

SEOUL - North and South Korea agreed Wednesday to hold a reunion later this month for families separated by the 1950-53 Korean War - the first for more than three years.

The agreement marked a rare moment of cooperation between the two rivals, especially coming just weeks before the South kicks off joint military exercises with the United States that have been vehemently denounced by Pyongyang.

Officials from both sides, meeting in the border truce village of Panmunjom, decided the reunion would be held February 20-25 at the North's Mount Kumgang resort, the South's Unification Ministry said.

"We hope that the latest agreement will be smoothly carried out to ease the suffering and pain of separated families," the ministry said in a statement.

Any sign of accord between North and South Korea tends to be greeted with optimism, given their perennial inability to cooperate on even the most basic trust-building measures.

However, both sides have been here before, and observers warn that setting dates does not necessarily mean the event will take place.

The two Koreas had agreed to hold a reunion last September but, even as the chosen relatives prepared to make their way to Mount Kumgang, Pyongyang cancelled at the last minute, citing "hostility" from the South.

And there are widespread concerns that the families could end up being disappointed again, given the unresolved tensions surrounding the South-US military drills that are sched-

uled to begin in late February.

North Korea has warned of dire consequences if the exercises go ahead, while Seoul and Washington have dismissed any possibility of their cancellation.

The annual drills are always a diplomatic flashpoint on the Korean peninsula, and resulted last year in an unusually sharp and extended surge in military tensions.

Yoo Ho-Yeol, professor of North Korean Studies at Seoul's Korea University, cautioned that the North might use the reunion agreement as a bargaining chip.

"Rather than cancelling the event again, it may try to extract concessions, like a scaling down of the joint military exercises," Yoo said.

US defence officials have already indicated that -- unlike the 2013 drills -- this year's version would not involve an aircraft carrier or strategic bombers.

The United States said Wednesday it welcomed the Korean agreement to press forward with reunions, but stressed the military drills would go ahead as planned.

"We certainly welcome the decision by South Korea and North Korea to set a date for family reunions," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters in Washington.

"As you know, we support improved inter-Korean relations, and ... this is certainly an example of that," she said.

However, Psaki emphasised she was "not at all" aware of any move by the US to call off February's drills in light of the planned reunion.

"These exercises occur around the same time every year and are a clear demonstration of the US commitment to the alliance," she said.

US warns of toothpaste bombs on Russia flights

WASHINGTON (AFP) - The US government warned American and foreign airlines on Wednesday that terrorists could try to place explosives disguised as toothpaste on Russia-bound flights.

An official told AFP it has information "specifically targeting flights to Russia," where the Winter Olympics will begin in the resort city of Sochi on Friday.

In a statement, the Department of Homeland Security said that, "out of an abundance of caution," it regularly shares relevant information with partners both at home and abroad.

"While we are not aware of a specific threat to the homeland at this time, this routine communication is an important part of our commitment to making sure we meet that priority," it said.

"As always, our security apparatus includes a number of measures, both seen and unseen, and DHS will continue to adjust security measures to fit an ever evolving threat environment," it said.

Security at the February 7-23 Games has been a major concern for Washington following two deadly December suicide attacks in the southern Russian city of Volgograd.

Adding to the concern is a stream of threats from Islamist militants in the volatile northern Caucasus region.

Earlier Wednesday, officials said two US warships have arrived in the Black Sea and will stand ready to offer assistance in the case of a security emergency at the massive sports event.



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I won't be intimidated in peace talks, says Kerry

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Amid a bitter spat between the US and Israel, Secretary of State John Kerry said Wednesday bullets were worse than words and vowed he would not be "intimidated" in his dogged quest for peace.

The two countries have been at loggerheads after senior Israeli figures attacked the top US diplomat for weekend comments in which he warned that if the peace talks fail, Israel could face a growing threat of a boycott by the international community.

Israeli ministers said his comments at a security conference in Munich were "offensive" and accused him of trying to "amplify" the boycott threat.

But Kerry hit back Wednesday that his words had been distorted, saying he had merely commented on what other people were saying.

The decorated veteran of the Vietnam war told CNN that he has "been attacked before by people using real bullets, not words, and I am not

going to be intimidated."

"I am not going to stand down with respect to President (Barack) Obama's commitment to try to find peace in the Middle East."

Kerry has pushed the Israelis and Palestinians back to the negotiating table and is trying to hammer out a framework agreement to guide the next months in the talks, with an April deadline for the negotiations looming.

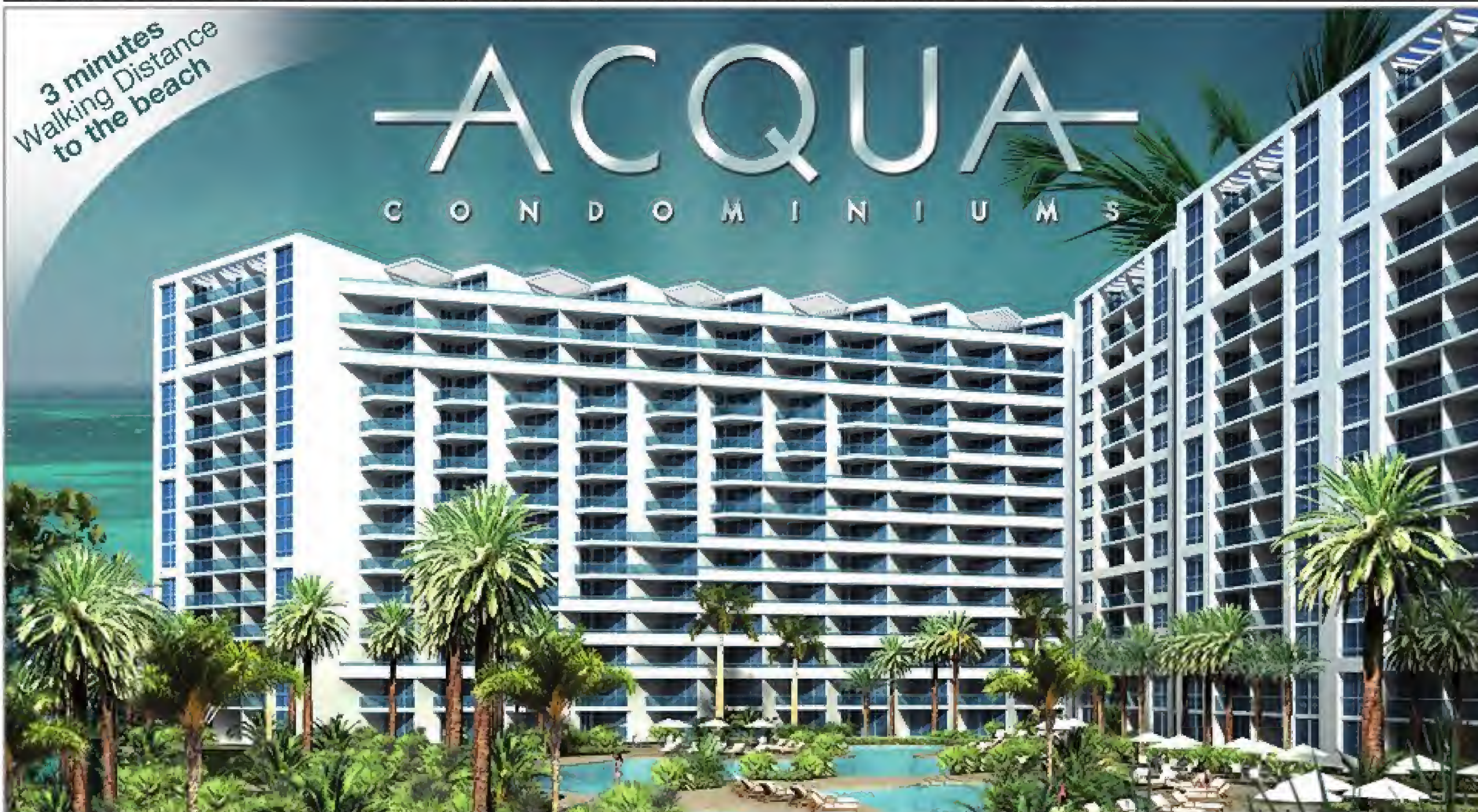
Details of the framework have been kept secret, but Kerry's spokeswoman Jen Psaki said the verbal attacks were "a sign the heat is on" as they tackle some of the toughest issues dividing the two sides.

Kerry was "not going to spend a lot of time worrying about words people are using against him," she told reporters.

"His greatest concern about this is the impact they have or they could have on the process. That the words aren't an attack on him, they're actually an attack on the peace process itself."

Shorts banned in Brazil heat, worker opts for skirt

RIO DE JANEIRO (AFP) - Faced with searing heat, no air conditioning and a ban on wearing shorts to work, a male civil servant in Rio swapped his trousers for his wife's skirt. Andre Amaral Silva, 41, decided to take sartorial action as the thermometer Tuesday hit 40.8 (105.4 Fahrenheit) and picked out a long black skirt from his wife's wardrobe. He then sent up the picture to Facebook, whereupon some 5,000 people shared it within hours and by Wednesday Silva was in the newspapers. The draftsman said the caretaker of the building where he works had tried to prevent him entering dressed as he was. He retorted that "if women are allowed (to wear a skirt) then I am too." Even then, it took an administrator to confirm that "wearing a skirt is permitted." Silva told O Globo daily: "It was all resolved very easily. People end up obeying rules without knowing where they come from. We are without air conditioning and even in this heat it hasn't been repaired," he explained. Silva added the skirt proved so comfortable he is thinking of not giving it back to his wife. The head of the Rio judiciary, Leila Mariana, last month ruled that lawyers on duty in Rio state need not swelter in full regalia given the excessive heat. But shorts were banned and long trousers and long-sleeved shirts remain de rigueur as do full suit and tie for when courts are in session.



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UN watchdog slams Vatican's child abuse record

GENEVA (AFP) - The United Nations condemned the Vatican Wednesday for failing to stamp out child abuse and allowing systematic cover-ups, calling on the Church to remove clergy suspected of raping or molesting children.

The Vatican hit back, accusing the world body's child rights watchdog of distorting the facts by failing to take into account fresh efforts to rid the Church of child abusers.

In an unprecedented report for a UN body, the Committee on the Rights of the Child slammed the Vatican for failing to live up to repeated pledges to put its house in order.

"The committee expresses serious concern that in dealing with child victims of different forms of abuse, the Holy See has systematically placed preservation of the reputation of the Church and the alleged offender over the protection of child victims," it said.

Saying abuse had affected "tens of thousands" of children worldwide, it urged the Vatican to "immediately remove all known and suspected child

sexual abusers from assignment and refer the matter to the relevant law enforcement authorities".

Committee head Kirsten Sandberg said that despite the Vatican's pledges to adopt a zero tolerance approach, it was in clear breach of the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The report said the Vatican had failed to acknowledge the extent of abuse, nor taken necessary measures to protect children, and had allowed perpetrators to continue with impunity.

It blasted the transfer of abusers to new parishes within countries, and even across borders, in an attempt to cover up their crimes and remove them from the clutches of justice.

The Vatican's UN envoy, Monsignor Silvano Tomasi, charged that the committee had ignored its child protection reforms.

Benedict XVI, pontiff from 2005 to 2013, was the first pope to apologise to abuse victims and call for zero tolerance. Critics, though, said

rhetoric outstripped real action.

His successor, Pope Francis, has said Catholics should feel "shame" for abuse and in December created a Church commission to investigate sex crimes, enforce prevention and care for victims.

The committee welcomed that, but said more was needed, including an independent mechanism to address abuse.

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) hailed the report.

"The quickest way to prevent child sexual violence by Catholic clerics is for Pope Francis to publicly remove all offenders from ministry and harshly punish their colleagues and supervisors who enabled their crimes," SNAP said.

The report followed a landmark January hearing where the 18 independent human rights experts from around the globe who make up the UN committee grilled senior Church officials.

Like other signatories of the UN child rights convention, the Vatican agrees to be scrutinised by the panel.

Colombia rebels accuse ex-president in spying scandal

HAVANA (AFP) - Colombia's FARC guerrilla group on Wednesday accused former president Alvaro Uribe of being behind alleged spying on peace negotiators by an army intelligence unit.

The alleged spying was revealed Tuesday by the weekly *Semana*, prompting the firing of two military intelligence chiefs.

Among those allegedly spied on was President Juan Manuel Santos' negotiating team at peace talks with the FARC in Havana.

In ordering a probe, Santos said "dark forces" were trying to sabotage the peace talks, but was not more specific.

However, the FARC's chief negotiator at the talks, Ivan Marquez, pointed the finger at Uribe, a hardliner who has bitterly opposed the peace talks.

"Alvaro Uribe is behind this," he told reporters before going into talks here.

"Don't forget Alvaro Uribe

Velez is public enemy number one of peace in Colombia," he said.

Marquez said the spying also targeted the FARC's delegation to the talks, and said the government should explain.

In Bogota, Santos said he had given the army's inspector general ten days to complete his investigation. Colombia's attorney general office is conducting a separate probe.

Separately, a group of leftist leaders, including Bogota mayor Gustavo Petro, and human rights activists said they had received death threats from a crime group called *Aguilas Negras*, or Black Eagles, made up in part of former rightist paramilitaries.

Ivan Cepeda, a congressional candidate for the leftist Alternative Democratic Pole, told AFP the threats were part of "a campaign to destabilize the country and sow unrest to sabotage the peace process in Havana."

Chinese scientists sound warning over new bird flu

PARIS (AFP) - Chinese scientists sounded the alarm Wednesday after a new bird flu virus, H10N8, killed an elderly woman in December and infected another individual last month.

The fifth novel influenza strain to emerge in 17 years, the virus has a worrying genetic profile and should be closely monitored, they reported in The Lancet medical journal.

It appears to be able to infect tissue deep in the lung and may have features allowing it to spread efficiently among humans, they said.

The warning stems from analysis of a virus sample taken from a 73-year-old woman who died in Nanchang, in southeastern Jiangxi province, on December 6 after being diagnosed

with severe pneumonia and respiratory failure.

The worry for health watchdogs is their potential to acquire an ability to jump easily from person to person.

H7N9, which emerged last year, has led to 159 human infections in China, including 71 deaths, according to a combined toll of official figures and an AFP tally of reports by local authorities.

H5N1, which first occurred among humans in Hong Kong in 1997, has caused 648 infections with 384 deaths since 2003, according to figures cited in The Lancet study.

The genome of H10N8, it said, pointed to a mutation in its so-called PB2 protein that, previous research has found, suggests an ability to adapt to mammals.



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Juveniles rescued, 45 arrested in Super Bowl vice raid

NEW YORK (AFP) - Sixteen juveniles were recovered and more than 45 people arrested during a crackdown on child prostitution linked to the Super Bowl, the Federal Bureau of Investigation said.

An FBI statement said the youngsters aged between 13 and 17 had been found in an operation targeting commercial child sex trafficking during the American football showpiece.

"High-profile special events, which draw large crowds, have become lucrative opportunities for child prostitution criminal enterprises," Ron Hosko, assistant director of the FBI's Criminal Investigative Division, said in a statement.

"The FBI and our partners remain committed to stopping this cycle of victimization and putting those who try to profit from this type of criminal activity behind bars," he added.

The FBI worked with more than 50 law enforcement agencies in four states during the crackdown ahead of Sunday's



NFL season finale in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

Several of the 45 people arrested admitted to traveling to New Jersey "specifically for the purpose of prostituting women and children at the Super Bowl," the FBI said.

The teenagers recovered during the raid included high school students and children who had been reported missing by their families.

Additional enforcement actions also led to the recovery of international human trafficking victims, the FBI added.

Last week US lawmakers warned child prostitution net-

works were exploiting events like the Super Bowl, with congressman Christopher Smith describing the event as a "sex trafficking magnet."

Smith cited figures from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, which reported that more than 10,000 women and girls were trafficked to Miami for the 2010 Super Bowl.

Carol Smolenski, of the non-profit End Child Prostitution and Trafficking-USA, testified before lawmakers that around 100,000 children are trafficked into the US sex trade every year.

US drugstore giant CVS to stop selling cigarettes



WASHINGTON (AFP) - The second largest US drugstore chain, CVS, announced Wednesday its 7,600 stores across the country will cease tobacco sales by October 1, despite the projected \$2 billion loss the move will entail. A decision President Barack Obama hailed as a "powerful example." The announcement makes CVS the first national US pharmacy chain to take such dramatic action to discourage smoking, although some other major retailers like Target have already stopped cigarette sales. Smoking remains the leading preventable cause of premature death in the United States, killing nearly half a million Americans each year, health experts say. Just last month, the United States marked the 50th anniversary of the first surgeon general's report to warn that smoking caused lung cancer. Since then, the habit has been attributed to 13 kinds of cancer and a host of other diseases, including liver and colon cancer, blindness and diabetes. Health experts have long questioned the practice by retail pharmacies of offering remedies aimed at improving health, while at the same selling cigarettes, cigars and chewing tobacco products.

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Malala nominated for 'Children's Nobel'

STOCKHOLM (AFP) - Pakistani schoolgirl Malala Yousafzai, who survived being shot in the head by the Taliban, was nominated for the World Children's Prize in Sweden on Wednesday for championing education rights for girls.

Malala was nominated last year for the Nobel Peace Prize and won the European Union's Sakharov human rights prize for her crusade for the right of all children to an education.

The 16-year-old, who now lives in Britain following extensive medical treatment, was shot by a Taliban gunman in 2012 over her outspoken views on education in her home region in northwest Pakistan.

The World Children's Prize - also known as the "Children's Nobel Prize" -- was founded in 2000 and aims to raise awareness of children's rights in 60,000 schools in 110 countries through educational programs which include studying champions of human rights and voting for the prize winners.

The two other nominees for this year's award are John Wood, founder of the US-based education charity Room to Read, and Indira Ramana-gar, a Nepali activist who helps prisoners' children.

All three nominees will receive a share of the \$100,000 (74,000-euro) prize money -- intended to go towards further activism -- at an award ceremony outside Stockholm in October 2014.

Autopsy on Hoffman inconclusive

NEW YORK (AFP) - The results of an autopsy on Oscar-winning actor Philip Seymour Hoffman's body were inconclusive, and further tests have been ordered, the New York medical examiner's office said.

A spokeswoman told AFP that pathologists had not yet reached a conclusion on the cause and manner of the death of the 46-year-old, whose body was found in his New York home on Sunday.

Police, who suspect a drugs overdose as the cause of death, said Hoffman was found with a needle in his arm, and there were 50 envelopes of heroin, syringes and other pills in the apartment.



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Pacific castaway prepares to go home

MAJURO (AFP) - Pacific castaway Jose Salvador Alvarenga was preparing Wednesday for a faster and more comfortable journey home after 13 months adrift in a small fishing boat, as his mother called his rescue "a divine miracle".

Officials in the Marshall Islands said Alvarenga would depart the tiny Pacific nation on Friday for Hawaii, before travelling on to El Salvador or Mexico.

Alvarenga was born in El Salvador but had lived for years in Mexico, where he says he set off on a fishing trip in late 2012 before becoming lost and drifting some 12,500-kilometres (8,000-miles) to the Marshalls in a small boat.

The 37-year-old said he survived by eating raw fish and birds as well as drinking turtle blood, urine and rainwater for 13 months, but a teenage companion named Xiguel starved to death during the ordeal.

El Salvador's Vice Foreign Minister Juan Jose Garcia told reporters Alvarenga could return in the next two days.

"What would be most desirable would be for Mr Alvarenga to travel directly to El Salvador. He will be setting off on the trip as soon as possible," Garcia said.

He said El Salvador was asking the International Organization for Migration to help



with a plane ticket and to accompany Alvarenga on the journey home.

Garcia said Alvarenga's health was "very stable. Other than a few cuts, he has no symptoms of dementia as a result of his trip, and is in condition to travel."

His family, including a 14-year-old daughter named Fatima who has no recollection of the father who left for Mexico before she was born, said they were looking forward to welcoming him home.

"It is a divine miracle, a sign that God was compassionate with our son's life," his mother Maria Julia said from her home on El Salvador's Pacific coast, tears of joy streaming down her face.

"I kept thinking that one day he would come back to us, that God wants him to return to our house."

Alvarenga was released

from hospital in the Marshall Islands capital Majuro late Tuesday after a medical check-up found he was suffering severe dehydration and the effect of a poor diet but otherwise healthy.

After shaving the bushy beard that grew during his months adrift, he was keeping a low profile in a local hotel on Wednesday, with two policemen guarding his room.

Alvarenga has become something of a celebrity in the Marshall Islands and Kattil said locals had taken him to their hearts.

"People have anonymously arrived at hospital to bring him food, clothes, toiletries and blankets," she said.

He is expected to hold a press conference before he leaves the Marshall Islands.

The stockily-built fisherman appeared remarkably healthy just days after being found wandering disorientated and

clad only in ragged underpants on the coral atoll where his boat washed up.

There were some contradictions regarding dates in various media interviews he has given since being rescued, but authorities in Mexico confirmed they launched an air and sea search for him and a missing boy in November 2012.

Fishermen in Mexico's southern Chiapas state also said they remembered Alvarenga, who was known by the nickname "La Chanca" or "fatty".

"We are surprised, but there is no doubt it's him," said fisherman William Uscanga after seeing a picture of the castaway.

While some have expressed scepticism about Alvarenga's account, survival experts such as Hilmar Snorrason of Britain's International Association for Safety and Survival Training said the remarkable feat was -- in theory -- possible.

In an interview with AFP from his hospital on Tuesday, Alvarenga said he had suicidal thoughts during his trip but was sustained by dreams of reuniting with his family and eating tortilla and chicken.

His mother was eager to oblige.

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Costa Rica to sue Nicaragua over territorial sea rights

SAN JOSÉ (AFP) - Costa Rica said Tuesday it will take Nicaragua to the International Court of Justice over what San Jose alleges is Managua's seeking to have oil exploration work done in Costa Rican waters.

"We are working on a suit against Nicaragua for usurping

and offering Costa Rican territorial seas, based on demarcation it did arbitrarily and unilaterally, to chart what it calls its oil (exploration) blocs," said Foreign Minister Enrique Castillo. He said the suit would be filed in the Hague before May 8, when President Laura Chinchilla's term ends. Castillo said San Jose would bring its concerns about the purported exploration offers to other neighboring nations in Central America.

In June 2013, Costa Rica sent a diplomatic note complaining that Nicaragua was claiming areas San Jose believes are in its territorial waters, and that Managua was promoting oil development there -- both on the Pacific and Caribbean coasts.

Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega says Costa Rica's claims are wide of the mark. He says what Nicaragua has offered for potential development are areas under its jurisdiction that the ICJ in November 2012 already clearly set out, when it defined territorial sea borders between Nicaragua and Colombia.

The neighbors have taken to the same court a dispute over the San Juan River that runs along their border. In March 2011 the court ordered both countries to stay out of the disputed area until the case is settled. Relations between the neighbors are deeply strained.

'Bionic hand' can now sense shape, texture



WASHINGTON (AFP) - An amputee with a bionic hand has for the first time been able to feel the texture and shape of objects in his grasp, European researchers said Wednesday.

The success of the month-long trial in Italy has energized researchers in the hunt to solve one of the most difficult challenges in prosthetics.

Until now, moveable prosthetic hands have returned no sensation to the wearer and have been difficult to control, meaning the user could crush an object while trying to grasp it.

Sorenson was fitted with a bulky mechanical hand that had several advanced sensors in each of the fingertips.

Those sensors delivered electrical signals through wires to several electrodes that were surgically implanted into his upper arm.

Even though his nerves had not been used in nearly a decade, scientists were able to reactivate his sense of touch.

Wearing a blindfold and

earplugs for the trial, which took place last year in Rome at Gemelli Hospital, Sorenson found he could tell the difference between a mandarin orange and a baseball.

He could also feel whether he was holding soft tissue, a hard piece of wood, or a flimsy plastic cup.

Sorenson joked that his children called him "The Cable Guy," when they saw all the wires coming out of his arm, hooking him up to the stationary hand, which was posed on a table.



400 dolphins dead on Peru beaches



LIMA (AFP) - The bodies of around 400 dolphins washed up on beaches in northern Peru last month, baffling authorities who are so far mystified as to the cause, officials said. The mammals' remains were found on beaches stretching across the northern departments of Piura and Lambayeque, said Peruvian Sea Institute (IMARPE) official Jaime de la Cruz in Chiclayo. Lambayeque is in far northern Peru, almost at the Ecuadorian border. Samples of the animals' remains were sent to Lima for autopsies to be done, De la Cruz said. The surge in deaths alarmed Carlos Yaipen, a marine veterinarian at the NGO Sea Animal Conservation Scientific Group (ORCA). Some local media reports speculated that toxic algae could have led to the deaths. But Yaipen said if that were the case, then humans would have been affected as well when they ate sea animals from the area. Yaipen said he wondered if a tragic reaction to nearby acoustic "impact" could have killed the dolphins, with oil companies doing exploratory drilling in the area. His group took samples to have tests run abroad, he said.



Daily Exchange Rates

Current as of: 02/05/2014

	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.77	1.79	1.83
Britain	GBP	2.80	2.85	2.96
Switzerland	CHF	191.71	192.43	198.75
Netherlands	EUR	230.59	232.69	243.63
Sweden	SEK	25.91	26.63	27.86
Denmark	DKK	30.23	30.95	32.89
Norway	NOK	30.67	31.39	29.06
Japan	JPY	214.88	216.84	178.12

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Oil prices edge higher after US energy report

NEW YORK (AFP) - World oil prices rose modestly Wednesday after a closely watched US oil report suggested severe winter weather across large parts of the country was pushing up demand for heating oil.

US benchmark West Texas Intermediate for delivery in March finished the session at \$97.38 a barrel, up 19 cents from Tuesday's close.

Brent North Sea crude for March rose 47 cents to settle at \$106.25 a barrel in London trade.

"US crude has been supported today by the colder weather, boosting heating oil demand," said Inenco analyst Lucy Sidebotham.

US commercial crude reserves rose for the third straight week, by 400,000 barrels in the week ending January 31, the US Department of Energy (DoE) reported Wednesday.

The increase was much smaller than the average analyst estimate of 2.2 million barrels.

But traders focused on the fourth straight week of declines in distillates, which include diesel and heating oil.

Distillates fell by 2.4 million barrels, more than the 2.0 million barrels estimated.

Bob Yawger of Mizuho Securities noted heating fuel stocks were at their lowest level since at least 1990.

Stockpiles at the trading hub in Cushing, Oklahoma, sank by 1.5 million barrels, the DoE said.

"Lower stocks in Cushing are helping support US oil prices currently," said Natixis oil analyst Deshpande Abhishek.



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S	O	S	F	A	M	E	D	S	E	T

Panama says canal work suspended, company denies

PANAMA CITY (AFP) - A dispute over a \$1.6-billion cost overrun in the Panama Canal's expansion took a new twist Wednesday after a Spanish company leading the project denied it halted work over the spat.

The Panama Canal Authority said the consortium led by Spanish builder Sacyr stopped work after negotiations broke down, but the company later announced that it made a "final offer" to prevent a shutdown.

The two sides have locked horns since December over overruns on widening the canal to accommodate massive cargo ships in the century-old waterway, which handles five percent of global seaborne trade.

Panama Canal Authority administrator Jorge Quijano said the "inflexible position" of the consortium known as Grupos Unidos por el Canal (GUPC) had derailed the negotiations.

President Ricardo Martinelli tried to rally his countrymen's support for their signature global brand.

In a statement, Sacyr said the Panama Canal Authority had decided to "break off negotiations" but company president Manuel Manrique later said that the company would keep the talks alive.

The project to widen the canal, one of the biggest civil engineering operations in the world, is due to be completed next year but GUPC has said that the dispute threatens to delay completion by up to five years.

In its earlier statement, Sacyr said the collapse of the talks "puts in danger the widening of the canal and up to 10,000 jobs."

Sacyr said that if a solution were not found immediately, Panama would face years of litigation before national and international courts "on the events which have brought this project to the edge of failure."

The European Union's industry commissioner, Antonio Tajani, who has mediated the dispute, warned that "the interruption of the works would be bad news for employment, for

the worldwide economy, for the expansion works of the canal."

Spain's Public Works Minister Ana Pastor called for an agreement be found quickly "because what is at stake is infrastructure that has an impact not only on the economy (of Panama) but also the world economy."

The canal facilities are being widened to permit the passage of ships carrying up to 12,000 containers, twice the current limit.

But the disputed contract to build locks, due initially to be completed this year, was already running nine months late and since the beginning of this year work has slowed down further.

GUPC says that unforeseen costs total \$1.6 billion (1.2 billion euros) beyond the initial \$3.2 billion value of the contract.

GUPC is in dispute with the Panama Canal Authority mainly over who was responsible for the quality of geological information and who should bear the cost of problems and delays arising from unexpected geological difficulties.

The consortium is proposing that the two sides each pay half of the extra costs until the project is completed.

They would then go before an international arbitration court for a decision on who is responsible for the unforeseen costs and who should pay.

The canal, completed in 1914 to offer a short cut and safer journey for maritime traffic travelling between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, is about 80 kilometres (50 miles) long and is used by 13,000-14,000 ships each year.

Puerto Rico to cut deficit, renegotiate debt

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Puerto Rico said Wednesday it would further reduce its deficit and seek to renegotiate some of its debt, a day after seeing its credit rating cut to junk status.

Responding to new pressure on its finances, Governor Alejandro Garcia Padilla announced he would reduce the US territory's fiscal deficit by \$170 million, slashing agency budgets by two percent and renegotiating tariffs and contracts with vendors.

Garcia Padilla said meanwhile the government, struggling to service some \$70 billion in debt, would try to renegotiate loans for which Standard & Poor's downgrade Tuesday triggered an acceleration of payments.

The rating agency lowered Puerto Rico's sovereign debt rating by one notch to BB+ -- speculative or junk status -- citing its huge debt and its still-large fiscal deficit.

S&P said that the government in San Juan has limited liquidity which cannot be fully financed by the territory's Government Development Bank.

The downgrade added significantly to the liquidity pres-

ures, raising the costs of servicing the debt, especially on short-term bonds.

The rating cut also came just as Puerto Rico's government was seeking to raise \$2 billion in fresh financing to, in effect, buy it time to strengthen domestic finances.

The Caribbean island's financial problems have shaken the \$3.7 trillion market for US municipal bonds, especially in the wake of the default last year by Detroit.



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PICKLES



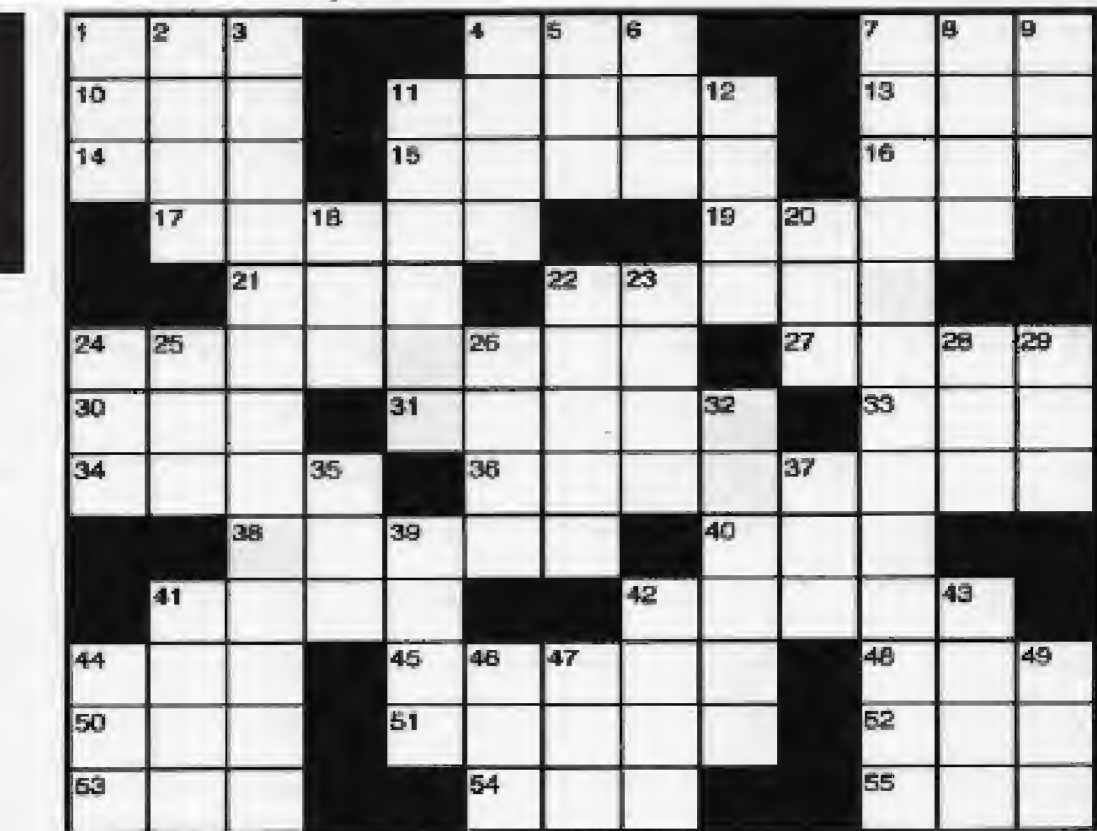
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- ACROSS**
- Pro
 - Singer "King" Cole
 - Angry crowd
 - From ____ Z (2 wds.)
 - Accountant's eyeshade
 - Man ____ mission (2 wds.)
 - Nervous twitch
 - Select few
 - Energy
 - Emulate Brinker
 - "What time ____?" (2 wds.)
 - Confused bustle
 - Light boat for Hiawatha
 - Submitted (2 wds.)
 - Sty dwellers
 - Undeveloped flower
 - Took out
 - Recent (prefix)
 - Monster
 - Said a different way
 - Kilns
 - Actor Jacobi
 - Female Egyptian ruler, for short
 - At ____ for words (2



- DOWN**
- Restriction on some diets
 - Singer
 - Flodding
 - Certain musician (3 wds.)
 - Cairo's waterway
 - "____ live and breathe!" (2 wds.)
 - Little tyke
 - Hollywood business (2 wds.)
 - "Don't bet ____!" (2 wds.)
 - Loud thud
 - Voted down
 - Restraining influence
 - Sum up
 - Dip in liquid
 - Quotes
 - All over again
 - Cable option
 - Leos' mo.
 - "Drat!"
 - "Gosh!"
 - Landscaper's stock
 - One hundred cents
 - Cain's mom
 - Kanga's baby
 - Centuries and centuries
 - Concern
 - U.S. native (abbr.)
 - Footgear
 - Farming implement
 - Green-lights
 - ____ Van Winkle
 - Switch settings

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Sudoku

SOLUTION

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

TAJ MAHAL; Taste of INDIA - If you like your Indian food authentic, or are looking for a new and unique dining experience, an evening at Taj Mahal will deliver a memorable meal. A seemingly endless menu offers scores of choices for fish, chicken, lamb and vegetarian dishes that are "the real deal;" discover that Indian food goes way beyond curry!

Taj Mahal's Tai Choice is a great way to start the meal and be initiated into the joys of Indian cuisine, offering a diverse selection of traditional favorites. It contains hearty portions of Pakoras, crispy vegetarian fritters, Aloo Tikki, potato cutlets, Chicken Tikka, tender chicken breast pieces seasoned just right, and shaped and seasoned ground lamb, charmingly dubbed "Sheik Kebabs." All is served on a bed of sliced onions and brought to your table on a sizzling platter, and you will want to dish those sautéed onions on to one of their tasty Indian breads called Naan, leaving behind not a single crumb.

Main dishes are accompanied by a choice of rice, mixed vegetables rich with garlic, or Naan, plain, buttered, onion or garlic, and you will want to order an extra basket or two of this tasty delight,



on which you can spoon your main course, as well. Poori is crispy fried naan, and most definitely worth the extra two dollars to sample with your meal. Located behind the Royal Plaza Mall, Taj Mahal offers a dining experience that is truly out of the ordinary; they feature an excellent and tasty selection for vegetarians too. If you are a fan of Indian food, or have been toying with trying it, Taj Mahal is the place for a very affordable dining experience and the real deal!

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rentals are quite affordable on Aruba, with the third party liability insurance included in the rental rates, as required by law.

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Outdoor training for Brazil Taekwondo before heading off to Suriname



ORANJESTAD - Last Saturday Robert Arends of the Brazil Taekwondo Foundation had just one address on his route, namely, Seroe Alejandro. The Train Hard Fight Smart team came well prepared for Clifford Rasmijn, the coach of the team for Suriname. Clifford Rasmijn began training the team at 8:45 am with a warm up to be followed by a run around the hill near the water tank. Once on the top of the hill Clifford began a heavy training.

This was the hardest training thus far for this team...it left them pretty exhausted. The goal of the diligent workout is to help them bring back the trophy for Aruba, the Copa TK5! This training, reportedly, could not have been any harder. The trip to Suriname is this Friday. Training will continue in the gym this week up to Thursday.

Success in Suriname, guys!

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FOOTBALL:



MADRID (AFP) - Real Madrid's Portuguese defender Pepe (L) argues with Atletico Madrid's Uruguayan defender Diego Godin during the Spanish Copa del Rey (King's Cup) semifinal first-leg football match. Real Madrid took a huge step towards reaching the Copa del Rey final as they beat local rivals and holders Atletico Madrid 3-0 yesterday at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid.



LYON (AFP) - Lyon's French forward Alexandre Lacazette (C) vies with Troyes' French midfielder Lionel Carole (R) and French defender Benjamin Nivet (L) during the French League Cup semi-final football match between Olympique Lyonnais and ESTAC Troyes, at the Gerland stadium in Lyon, southeastern France, yesterday. Lyon won 2-1.



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If it is a sport we will show it!

Aruban Bowling delegation has left for Camp Training in Dallas, Texas

ORANJESTAD - Last Monday a bowling delegation consisting of bowlers Thashaina Seraus, Laurence Wilming and Jason Odor left for Dallas, Texas where they will be attending a week's training at

ITRC Training's Center.

These athletes will be training the whole week. At this training's camp, the athletes will be working on aspects of consistency of the game, versatility, lane play, ball movements, working in teams and mental training. They will be under the guidance of four international and experienced trainers.

The training in Dallas will also serve as training for the 2014 South American Games

scheduled for the month of March in Santiago, Chile.

The Subsidy Commission of Lotto pa Deporte is pleased to finance this delegation and their special camp training. This will definitely help prepare them for the upcoming South American Games. The Commission and Lotto pa Deporte wishes the delegation much success in their training in Dallas, Texas.

from 1 to r: Jason - Thashaina and Laurence

Football: Ronaldo banned for three league games

MADRID (AFP) - Recently crowned Ballon d'Or winner Cristiano Ronaldo will miss Real Madrid's next three league games after being sent-off in his side's 1-1 draw against Athletic Bilbao on Sunday. The score was already tied at 1-1 when Ronaldo was shown the eighth red card of his career after clashing with Athletic midfielder Ander Iturraspe 15 minutes from time. The Spanish Football Federation handed the Portuguese the normal one game ban for a straight red card, but also added an extra two games for a gesture of dissent Ronaldo made as he left the field. Madrid still have the option to appeal the ban, but, should it be upheld, Ronaldo will be ruled out of the La Liga fixtures against Villarreal, Getafe and Elche.

Olympics: Billie Jean King withdraws from US delegation

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Openly gay tennis legend Billie Jean King has withdrawn from the US presidential delegation to the Winter Olympics in Russia, citing the ill-health of her mother, officials said Wednesday.

The inclusion of King in the opening ceremony delegation selected by the White House raised eyebrows when it was announced last December amid ongoing controversy over Russia's anti-gay laws.

A White House spokesman said King's place at the opening ceremony delegation would instead be taken by former US hockey star Caitlin Cahow, who is also openly gay. Cahow had initially been due to participate in the delegation for the closing ceremony.

King's selection in the US delegation had been seen as symbolic move by the White House as controversy raged over a Russian law passed in June last year banning gay "propaganda" to minors.

The 70-year-old former multi-Grand Slam-winning champion has long championed equality for gays and lesbians.

This year's Winter Games are the first Olympics since 2000 in which the US delegation has not featured a US President, Vice-President or First Lady.

It comes against a backdrop of strained relations between Russia and the United States on various foreign policy issues, including Syria and US intelligence leaker Edward Snowden.

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Football: Beckham to build 'global' club in Miami

MIAMI (AFP) - David Beckham plans to bring football back to Miami, hoping his personal fame and fortune will help him build a new Major League Soccer team of truly global stature.

The former England and Manchester United star said Wednesday he already has major players calling him seeking to join a US team that may one day rival the European giants where he became a superstar.

The former midfielder, who wore a slim-fitting gray suit and a tie despite the 82 degree Fahrenheit (28 C) weather, said one of his partners would be British pop music and television impresario Simon Fuller, who managed Beckham's wife Victoria when she sang with the Spice Girls.

Beckham, who reportedly paid a cut price \$25 million for the franchise, said his wife and family would join him in Miami.

He did not disclose when the team would be ready for action, but reports suggest it will be in 2016 or 2017.

Beckham appeared alongside MLS commissioner Don Garber, who said Beckham and the league would work with Miami Dade county to build a world-class downtown stadium for the new club.

Beckham thanked Garber and Mayor Gimenez, and said he would not seek public funding for the team's stadium -- a comment which elicited cheers -- having raised money from private partners.

The new club, which does not yet have a name, is looking to build a stadium for 25,000 spectators, with reports suggesting Beckham is eager for an eye-catching location close to the water.

Miami has been without a football team since the Miami Fusion folded more than a decade ago, but Beckham -- whose popularity and fame endures despite retirement from the game -- will be hoping his star pulling power can be the difference.

"This is the first time in the modern era that an ex-athlete is joining the ranks of ownership," Garber said.

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Olympics: Putin declares Russia 'ready' as torch comes to Sochi

SOCHI (AFP) - Russia paraded the Olympic torch through host city Sochi on Wednesday -- two days before the official opening of the Winter Games -- as President Vladimir Putin declared the country "ready".

Seven years after its successful bid stunned the world and paved the way for the hosting of the biggest event in Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union, organisers are now making the finishing touches



for the opening of the 22nd Winter Olympics.

Yet concerns still remain over Russia's suitability as a venue, with another anti-Games ecological activist sent to jail and protests planned worldwide over Russia's now notorious anti-gay law.

The Olympic flame was taken by runners through the outskirts of Sochi and later carried up by train to Rosa Khutor, where the alpine events are being held.

The stadium itself is 40 kilometres (25 miles) south of Sochi and the flame is expected to be carried there by runners, on trains and on boats in time for Friday's opening ceremony.

Flame carriers are set to include UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and IOC president Thomas Bach as well as Russian stars such as pole vault champion Yelena Isinbayeva.